

REMARKS

Claims 1-50 were pending in this application when the present Office Action was mailed (September 28, 2005). Claims 1, 13, 20, 28, 35, 40, 43, and 48 have been amended to clarify aspects of these claims. Claims 43 and 48 have also been amended to correct minor typographical errors. Accordingly, claims 1-50 remain pending.

In the non-final Office Action mailed September 28, 2005, claims 1-50 were rejected. More specifically, the status of this application in light of the September 28 Office Action is as follows:

(A) Claims 1-5, 7, 8, 10-12, 35, 37-39, 40-42, and 48-50 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 2,515,205 to Fieux ("Fieux");

(B) Claim 9 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fieux;

(C) Claims 6 and 36 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fieux in view of U.S. Patent No. 1,960,264 to Heinkel ("Heinkel");

(D) Claims 13, 14, 16, 17, 19, and 43-47 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,238,043 to Siegel et al. ("Siegel");

(E) Claims 15 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Siegel in view of Heinkel;

(F) Claims 20-22 and 24-34 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fieux in view of Siegel; and

(G) Claim 23 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fieux in view of Siegel, and in further view of Heinkel.

The undersigned attorney wishes to thank the Examiner for engaging in a telephone interview on January 18, 2006 to discuss the present Office Action, the

applied references (Fieux and Siegel), and the pending claims. The following remarks summarize and expand upon the results of the interview, and they also reflect the agreements reached between the undersigned attorney and the Examiner during the telephone interview. For example, the following remarks reflect the Examiner's acknowledgement that amending claim 1 to clarify that the launch carriage is accelerated with a generally constant force would distinguish the claim over Fieux. Claim 1 has been so amended and, accordingly, the Section 102 rejection of claim 1 should be withdrawn.

A. Response to the Section 102 Rejection of Claims 1-5, 7, 8, 10-12, 35, 37-39, 40-42 and 48-50 (Fieux)

Claims 1-5, 7, 8, 10-12, 35, 37-39, 40-42 and 48-50 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Fieux. As stated above, the Examiner acknowledged during the January 18 telephone conference that Fieux cannot support a Section 102 rejection of amended independent claim 1. Therefore, the rejection of this claim should be withdrawn.

Claims 2-5, 7, 8, and 10-12 depend from base claim 1. As discussed above, claim 1 is allowable. Therefore claims 2-5, 7, 8, and 10-12 are allowable as depending from claim 1, and also because of the additional features of these dependent claims. Accordingly, the Section 102 rejection of claims 2-5, 7, 8, and 10-12 should be withdrawn.

During the January 18 telephone interview, the Examiner further agreed that amending claims 35, 40, and 48 to clarify that the launch carriage is accelerated with a generally constant force would distinguish these claims over the applied reference. Claims 35, 40, and 48 have been so amended and, accordingly, the Section 102 rejection of these claims should be withdrawn.

Claims 37-39 depend from base claim 35, claims 41 and 42 depend from base claim 40, and claims 49 and 50 depend from base claim 48. As discussed above, claims 35, 40, and 48 are allowable. Therefore, claims 37-39, 41, 42, 49, and 50 are allowable as depending from allowable base claims 35, 40, and 48, and also because

of the additional features of these dependent claims. Accordingly the Section 102 rejection of claims 37-39, 41, 42, 49, and 50 should be withdrawn.

B. Response to the Section 103 Rejection of Claim 9 (Fieux)

Claim 9 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fieux. Claim 9 depends from base claim 1. As discussed above, the Examiner acknowledged during the January 18 telephone interview that Fieux fails to disclose or suggest the features of claim 1. Furthermore, it would not have been obvious to modify Fieux to include the features of claim 9. Accordingly, dependent claim 9 is allowable over Fieux for at least the reason that this reference fails to teach or suggest the features of claim 1, and the additional features of dependent claim 9. Therefore, the Section 103 rejection of claim 9 should be withdrawn.

C. Response to the Section 103 Rejection of Claims 6 and 36 (Fieux and Heinkel)

Claims 6 and 36 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fieux in view of Heinkel. Claim 6 depends from base claim 1 and claim 36 depends from base claim 35. As stated above, Fieux fails to disclose or suggest the features of claims 1 and 35. Heinkel fails to cure the deficiencies of Fieux to support a prima facie rejection of claims 1 and 35 under Section 103. Accordingly, dependent claims 6 and 36 are allowable over Fieux and Heinkel for at least the reason that these references, either alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest the features of claims 1 and 35, and the additional features of claims 6 and 36. Therefore, the Section 103 rejection of claims 6 and 36 should be withdrawn.

D. Response to the Section 102 Rejection of Claims 13, 14, 16, 17, 19, and 43-47 (Siegel)

Claims 13, 14, 16, 17, 19, and 43-47 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Siegel. During the January 18 telephone interview, the Examiner agreed that amending independent claims 13 and 43 to clarify that the launch carriage is accelerated with a generally constant force would distinguish these claims over Siegel. Claims 13 and 43 have been so amended and, accordingly, the Section 102 rejection of these claims should be withdrawn.

Claims 14, 16, 17, and 19 depend from base claim 13, and claims 44-47 depend from base claim 43. As discussed above, claims 13 and 43 are allowable. Therefore, claims 14, 16, 17, 19, and 44-47 are allowable as depending from allowable base claims 13 and 43, and also because of the additional features of these dependent claims. Accordingly, the Section 102 rejection of claims 14, 16, 17, 19, and 44-47 should be withdrawn.

E. Response to the Section 103 Rejection of Claims 15 and 18 (Siegel and Heinkel)

Claims 15 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Siegel in view of Heinkel. Claims 15 and 18 depend from base claim 13. As stated above, Siegel fails to disclose or suggest the features of claim 13. Heinkel fails to cure the deficiencies of Siegel to support a prima facie rejection of claim 13 under Section 103. Accordingly, dependent claims 15 and 18 are allowable over Siegel and Heinkel for at least the reason that these references, either alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest the features of claim 13, and the additional features of claims 15 and 18. Therefore, the Section 103 rejection of claims 15 and 18 should be withdrawn.

F. Response to the Section 103 Rejection of Claims 20-22 and 24-34 (Fieux and Siegel)

Claims 20-22 and 24-34 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fieux in view of Siegel. During the January 18 telephone interview, the Examiner agreed that amending independent claims 20 and 28 to clarify that the launch carriage is accelerated with a generally constant force would distinguish these claims over Fieux and Siegel. Claims 20 and 28 have been so amended and, accordingly, the Section 103 rejection of these claims should be withdrawn.

Claims 21, 22, and 24-27 depend from base claim 20, and claims 29-34 depend from base claim 28. As discussed above, claims 20 and 28 are allowable. Therefore, claims 21, 22, 24-27, and 29-34 are allowable as depending from allowable base claims 20 and 28, and also because of the additional features of these dependent

claims. Accordingly, the Section 103 rejection of claims 21, 22, 24-27, and 29-34 should be withdrawn.

G. Response to the Section 103 Rejection of Claim 23 (Fieux, Siegel, and Heinkel)

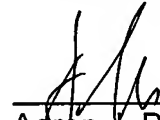
Claim 23 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fieux in view of Siegel, and in further view of Heinkel. Claim 23 depends from base claim 20. As discussed above, Fieux and Siegel fails to disclose or suggest the features of claim 20. Heinkel fails to cure the deficiencies of Fieux and Siegel to support a prima facie rejection of claim 20 under Section 103. Accordingly, dependent claim 23 is allowable over Fieux, Siegel, and Heinkel for at least the reason that these references, either alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest the features of claim 20, and the additional features of claim 23. Therefore, the Section 103 rejection of claim 23 should be withdrawn.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, the pending claims comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112 and are patentable over the applied art. The applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application and a mailing of a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner has any questions or believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is encouraged to call the undersigned at (206) 359-3982.

Respectfully submitted,

Perkins Coie LLP



Aaron J. Poledna

Registration No. 54,675

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Correspondence Address:

Customer No. 25096
Perkins Coie LLP
P.O. Box 1247
Seattle, Washington 98111-1247
(206) 359-8000